

tion to these two, the word distress has offered itself, the selection of anyone from the three has perhaps always been determined by habit, or accident, rather than by any perception of a distinct signification. The same remark is applicable to the words blessed, happy, righteous, virtuous, carnal, sensual, and a multitude of others. So that though there are few words strictly synonymous, yet there are very many which are so in *effect*, even by the allowance and sanction of the most rigid laws to which any of the best writers have conformed their composition. Perhaps this is a defect in human thinking; of which the ideal perfection may be, that every conception should be so discriminative and precise, that no two words, which have a definable shade of difference in their meaning, should be equally and indifferently eligible to express that conception. But what writer or speaker will ever even aspire to such perfection of thinking?—not to say that if he did, he would soon find the vocabulary of the most copious language deficient of single direct terms, and indeed of possible combinations of terms, to mark all the sensible modifications of his ideas. If a divine felt that he had such extreme discrimination of thought, that he meant something clearly different by the words carnal, godly, edifying, and so of many others, from what he could express by the words, sensual, pious, religious, instructive, he would certainly do right to adhere to the more peculiar words; but if he does not, he may perhaps improve the vehicle, without hurting the material, of his religious communications, by adopting the general and what may be called classical mode of expression.

The third distinction of the theological dialect consists, in words almost peculiar to the language of divines, and for which equivalent terms *cannot* be found, except in the form of definition or circumlocution. Sanctification, regeneration, grace, covenant, salvation, and a few more, may be assigned to this class. These may be called, in a qualified sense, the technical terms of evangelical religion. Now, separately from any religious considerations, it is plainly necessary, in a literary view, that all those terms that express a modification of thought which there are no other words competent to express, without great circumlocution, should be retained. They are requisite to the sufficiency of the language. And then, in considering those terms as